

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

S E C R E T STATE 121974

EXDIS CANBERRA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB

FOLLOWING REPEAT SINGAPORE 2165 ACTION SECSTATE MAY 21

QUOTE

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 2165

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (DOWNGRADING INFO)

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: MASS, MILI, SN

SUBJ: GOS REQUEST FOR USAF PERSONNEL

REF: SINGAPORE 2164

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AIDE-MEMOIRE DATED APRIL 29 REPORTED
REFTEL (DETAILED ANNEXES WILL BE POUCHED TO IMS COUNTRY DIR-
ECTOR).

2. QUOTE: SECONDMENT OF AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL TO THE
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE AIR FORCE. UNQUOTE.

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3. QUOTE: IT IS THE POLICY OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT NOT TO PROVIDE

MILITARY PERSONNEL ON LOAN TO COUNTRIES WHICH ARE NOT RECIPIENTS OF U.S. MILITARY AID. SINGAPORE HAS THEREFORE NEVER OBTAINED LOAN AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL TO ASSIST AND ADVISE IN THE BUILD UP OF HER DEFENCE FORCE. A RECONSIDERATION OF THIS POLICY IS SOUGHT FOR THE PROVISION OF AIR FORCE PERSONNEL TO MAN APPOINTMENTS AT STAFF AND SQUADRON LEVELS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE AIR FORCE (RSAF).

4. QUOTE: SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1969, THE RSAF HAS BEEN MANNED BY EXPERIENCED AIR FORCE PERSONNEL PRIMARILY FROM COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES EITHER ON LOAN OR CONTRACT TERMS. DEPENDENCE ON COMMONWEALTH PERSONNEL WAS DICTATED BY THE TYPES OF HARDWARE PURCHASE FOR THE AIR FORCE - MAINLY THE BRITISH HUNTER AIRCRAFT AND BLOODHOUND SAMs. ALTHOUGH LOCAL PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN TRAINED IN FLYING, TECHNICAL AND SUPPORT DUTIES, MOST ARE NOT SUFFICIENTLY EXPERIENCED TO ASSUME SENIOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS OR EVEN SENIOR COMMAND POSITIONS IN SQUADRONS. HENCE THE RSAF WILL CONTINUE TO DEPEND ON FOREIGN AIR FORCE PERSONNEL. (DATA ON THE NUMBER OF FOREIGN PILOTS IN THE RSAF ARE IN ANNEX A).

5. QUOTE: IN 1972 SINGAPORE PURCHASED HER FIRST AMERICAN COMBAT AIRCRAFT, NAMELY THE EX-U.S. NAVY SKYHAWKS REFURBISHED UNDER CONTRACT BY LOCKHEEDS. THERE ARE NOW TWO SKYHAWK SQUADRONS WITH A TOTAL ESTABLISHMENT OF 48 AIRCRAFT. PILOTS ARE TRAINED IN THE U.S. BY THE U.S. NAVAL AIR FORCE UNDER A SPECIAL CONTRACT. THE PHASING IN OF THE SKYHAWKS INTO THE RSAF MAKES IT NECESSARY TO ENGAGE AIR FORCE PERSONNEL WHO ARE AU FAIT WITH AMERICAN MILITARY AVIATION. HENCE CHINESE AIR FORCE PILOTS WERE RECRUITED

TO MAN THE SENIOR APPOINTMENTS IN THE SKYHAWK SQUADRONS AND TWO EX-U.S. MARINE OFFICERS WERE EMPLOYED ON CONTRACT TERMS AS SKYHAWK CONSULTANTS. THE PREVAILING POLICY ON NO AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL FOR SINGAPORE HAS MADE IT NECESSARY FOR THE FORMAL STATUS OF AMERICAN CONSULTANTS IN THE SINGAPORE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE TO BE EMPLOYEES OF PRIVATE COMPANIES. IN THIS INSTANCE THE COMPANY WAS A GOVERNMENT OWNED ENTERPRISE ENGAGED IN THE SALE OF SCRAP IRON AND WRECKED VEHICLES FROM SOUTH VIETNAM.

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6. QUOTE: THE POSSIBLE INTRODUCTION, IN THE NEAR FUTURE, OF AN AMERICAN ALL WEATHER SUPERSONIC FIGHTER AIRCRAFT TO REPLACE THE HUNTERS AND THE EVENTUAL REPLACEMENT OF BLOODHOUNDS BY A U.S. SAM SYSTEM, PROVIDE ADDITIONAL REASONS WHY U.S. AIR FORCE PERSONNEL ARE NEEDED FOR COMMAND STAFF AND TRAINING APPOINTMENTS IN THE RSAF.

7. QUOTE: LOCAL PILOTS ARE NOT READY FOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS AS THEY LACK EXPERIENCE IN MILITARY AVIATION AND NEED TO OBTAIN

MORE COCKPIT HOURS. SINGAPORE HAS NOTED THAT OF LATE IT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN HIGH CALIBRE AIR FORCE PERSONNEL ON SECONDMENT FROM THE COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES. DEFENCE BUDGET REDUCTIONS AND SHRINKAGE OF STAFF ESTABLISHMENTS IN THESE COUNTRIES HAVE MADE SENIOR PERSONNEL WARY OF SECONDMENT TO SINGAPORE FOR FEAR THAT ON THEIR RETURN, THEY WOULD BE DECLARED REDUNDANT.

8. QUOTE: IT IS THEREFORE PROPOSED THAT THE U.S. &9;34,.3,5 AGREES, IN PRINCIPLE, TO REVERSE ITS CURRENT POLICY AND MAKE AVAILABLE AMERICAN AIR FORCE PERSONNEL FOR LOAN SERVICE TO THE SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT. THE LIST OF POSTS TO BE FILLED AND THE QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED ARE IN ANNEX B. DETAILS ON THE SECONDMENT TERMS WILL BE TAKEN UP THROUGH NORMAL CHANNELS WITH THE U.S. AIR ATTACHE IN SINGAPORE. UNQUTEM CRONK UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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